

Military Operations

Joint Operational Concept for Air Base Ground Defense

Headquarters
Departments of the Army, and The Air
Force
Washington, DC
15 July 1986

UNCLASSIFIED

SUMMARY of CHANGE

DA PAM 525-14/AFP 206-4

Joint Operational Concept for Air Base Ground Defense

Not applicable.

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PREFACE

This U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force document sets forth the general operating procedures for Air Base Ground Defense. It describes actions required by U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force elements to plan and execute the defense of U.S. Forces and air bases and installations in the rear area.

This publication will be used by the Army and Air Force as general operating procedures in conducting joint contingency planning, training, and exercises involving the defense of Air Force air bases and installations in the rear area. If the host nation assumes the mission of protecting air bases and installations in the rear area, normally, the Army will be the executive agent for establishing support agreements with the host nation.

Military Operations

Joint Operational Concept for Air Base Ground Defense

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History. This publication has been reorganized to make it compatible with the Army electronic publishing database. No content has been changed.

Summary. This publication provides guidance for the defense of U.S. Air Force bases and installations within an oversea theater rear area. This publication fulfills Joint Force Development Initiative No. 8 in accordance with the AR/USAF Chief of Staff memorandum signed 22 May 1984, and with the Joint Service Agreement (USA-USAF) for the Ground Defense of Air Force Bases and Installations, 25 April 1985.

Applicability. This pamphlet applies to the Active Army, the Army National Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve. It applies to ground defense planners in Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, major commands, Special Operating Agencies,

and Direct Reporting Units. It does not apply to the U.S. Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units and activities.

Proponent and exception authority. The proponent agencies of this pamphlet are the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command and the U.S. Air Force.

Impact on New Manning System. This pamphlet does not contain information that affects the New Manning System.

Interim changes. Interim changes to this pamphlet are not official unless they are authenticated by The Adjutant General. Users will destroy interim changes on their expiration dates unless sooner superseded or rescinded.

Suggested Improvements. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and

Blank Forms) directly to Commander, U. S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (ATDO-C), Fort Monroe, VA 23651-5000 or by letter to HQ USAF/IGS, WASH DC 20330-5100.

Distribution. *Army:* Active Army, ARNG, USAR: To be distributed in accordance with DA Form 12-9A, requirements for Military Publications—C and D.

Air Force: F; X (Controlled by OPR).

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Glossary

1. Purpose

This document describes the concept for operations involving U.S. Army Military Police and U.S. Air Force Security Police in the defense of air bases. The concept focuses on operations to defend installations from attack by threat ground forces.

2. References

Related publications are listed below.

- a. Joint Service Agreement on United States Army—United States Air Force Ground Defense of Air Force Bases and Installations.
- b. Field Manual 90–14, Rear Battle.
- c. Air Force Regulation 206–1, Vol I, Ground Defense of Main Operating Bases, Installations, and Activities.
- d. JCS Pub 1, Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.
- e. JCS Pub 2, Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF).

3. Explanation of abbreviations and terms

Abbreviations and special terms used in this pamphlet are explained in the glossary.

4. Program overview

The generation of friendly aircraft sorties is integral to success on the AirLand battlefield. Aircraft sorties supporting the AirLand combat operations are normally generated from Air Force main operating bases (fig 1) located behind the forward line of own troops (FLOT), either in or behind the corps rear area. These bases present a lucrative target for enemy attack as they contain large concentrations of war-fighting materiel in relatively confined areas. Consequently, the enemy will devote a corresponding high degree of effort to disrupt friendly sortie generation, employing tactical aircraft, missiles, and ground forces to achieve their objectives. The objective of air base ground defense (ABGD) operations is to prevent degradation of sortie generation by detecting and engaging enemy forces at a distance far enough from the base to prevent their utilization of standoff weapons and the completion of their reconnaissance mission. This concept focuses on operations to defend air bases and installations from attack by enemy ground forces.

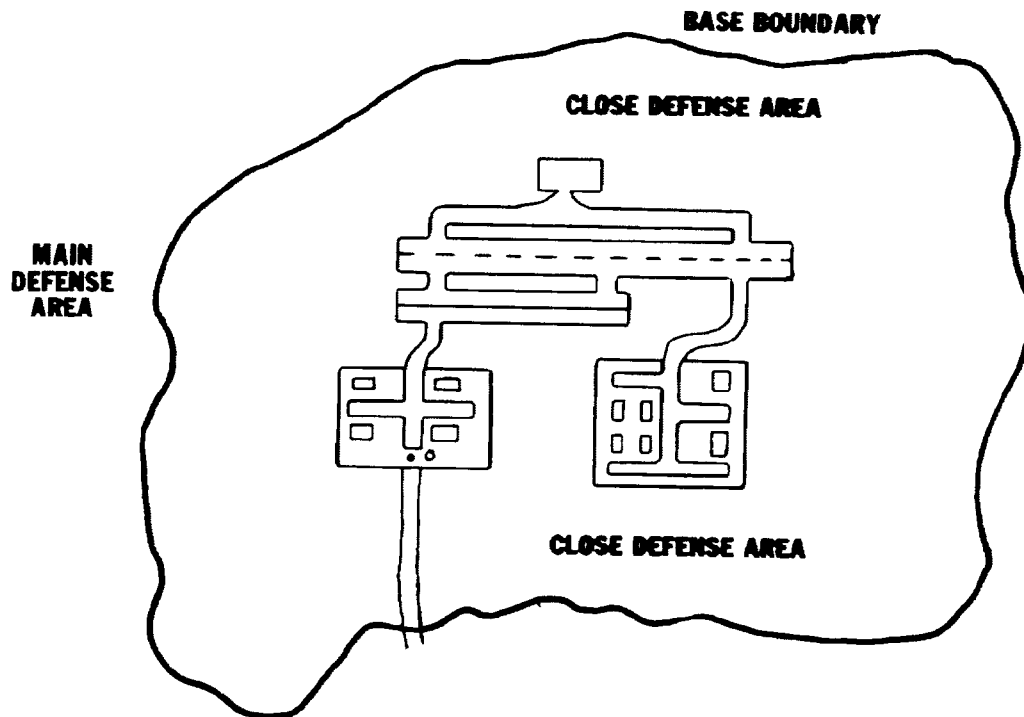


Figure 1. Air Force main operating base (MOB)

5. Threat

a. Air bases/installations (henceforth referred to as bases or air bases), as do other rear area facilities, face a ground threat which, for planning purposes, is divided into three threat levels.

(1) *Level I.* The level I threat is posed by agents, saboteurs, partisans, and terrorist groups. Safeguarding nuclear weapons and other high priority resources against this threat is the primary mission of the Air Force Security Police. The security police (SP) are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to defend the base against the level I threat.

(2) *Level II.* The level II threat includes tactical units smaller than battalion size, particularly unconventional warfare forces (for example, SPETSNAZ and Ranger-Commandos) whose primary tasks are covert reconnaissance and sabotage missions to disrupt friendly sortie generation. These forces may also use standoff weapons from outside the base boundaries, or they may infiltrate the base and employ explosive devices, silent killing techniques, and other methods to accomplish their objectives. Equipped with a diversity of weapons, they possess the capability of engaging in combat with friendly ground defense forces, if necessary, to accomplish their mission. However, these enemy forces normally operate covertly in small groups, avoiding detection to increase their probability of success. SP and military police (MP) are organized, trained, and equipped to defend against the level II threat.

(3) *Level III.* The level III threat is posed by tactical military units of battalion size or larger resulting from overt enemy heliborne, airborne, amphibious, or ground force operations. A level III threat will probably include an air base as part of a larger, coordinated plan, rather than as an individual or separate target. Friendly force response to the level III threat involves the commitment of the requisite Tactical Combat Forces (TCFs) to destroy the threat.

b. The primary ground threat to air bases is posed by level II forces. The enemy is capable of conducting level II actions against many bases simultaneously. Accordingly, air base ground defense forces are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to defeat the level II threat while maintaining a limited capability to detect, delay and disrupt level III threat forces until the arrival of friendly tactical combat forces.

6. Concept of the operation

a. The defense of critical assets such as air bases is accomplished as an integral part of rear battle operations for the entire force. The rear battle is fought within the basic tenets of the Airland Battle. The following are the Airland Battle tenets as they apply to ABGD.

(1) *Initiative.* Aggressively deny the enemy landing areas and restrict access to critical bases. Air bases are excellent examples of landing areas and critical bases.

(2) *Depth.* Ensure a distribution of support so that the main battle is not dependent on only one facility to continue the battle. Plan for alternative support and be prepared to shift that support without interruption. Air bases are geostationary locations that are not easily relocated.

(3) *Agility.* Anticipate and react to any rear area threat by moving the necessary forces to meet and destroy the threat at any level throughout the width and depth of the rear area.

(4) *Synchronization.* Sustain air sortie generation and coordinate combat assets simultaneously to neutralize the rear area threat without degradation of air sortie generation or the freedom of maneuver.

b. Rear battle is an Army command responsibility. The Army echelon commander appoints a rear battle officer, who has area responsibility for directing the rear battle effort within an assigned rear area. The rear battle officer will use the Rear Area Operations Center (RAOC) to exercise the necessary command and control.

c. Air base commanders are responsible for the local ground defense of their bases. Defense of air bases against enemy ground attack involves operations both internal and external to the base. The Air Force is responsible for the internal defenses of its bases and for exercising command and control over those forces committed to the external defense, as outlined in paragraph 9c. (See para 11 for situations involving host nation support.) The Army is responsible for defensive operations external to air bases. The Army's responsibilities for external defense are to be accomplished by providing forces as outlined in paragraph 9c. Air base priorities will be provided by the air component commander to the ground component commander in coordination with the joint force commander to assist in determining ABGD force allocations. The echelon commander allocates forces for rear battle operations based on the threat, the availability of host nation assets, the overall concept of operation, and the theater commander's priorities.

d. As additional forces arrive in theater, the echelon commander may have greater flexibility in force allocations. The overall objective is to provide ABGD as an integrated part of rear battle operations to secure these critical operational assets.

e. As dictated by the threat, environment, and availability of Army or host nation forces assigned for external defense, the Air Force may, in coordination with the local ground force commander, employ external safeguards to provide early warning and detection of, and reaction to, enemy threats to air bases and installations.

f. Contingency operations may also require ABGD forces. In these situations ABGD operations will depend on

several key factors which should be specifically addressed as the mission is planned. The key planning factors that will affect the forces committed to ABGD are as follows:

- (1) Mission, enemy, terrain, troops, and time available (METT-T).
- (2) Intelligence preparation of the battlefield, tactical, and strategic intelligence.
- (3) Posture of the host nation.
- (4) Degree of acceptable risk.

g. Where ground maneuver forces are austere or nonexistent, the echelon commander must still provide forces for ABGD. Tactical combat forces and MP will be allocated to the rear battle based on the force's overall objectives. This decision considers the force multiplier effect that tactical air power has on the full depth of the battlefield.

7. Internal defense

a. Responsibilities of the Chief of Security Police (CSP).

(1) The base CSP is the commander of the air base internal defense force operating in the close defense area (CDA). (See fig 2.) The CDA, though geographically encompassed by a boundary, is actually fluid in its integration with the external defense area (synonymous with main defense area (MDA)). The CSP will prepare the internal defense using security police and other assets assigned by the air base commander. The tactical operations center for air base ground defense is called the Base Defense Operations Center (BDOC). The BDOC will coordinate directly with the Army RAOC for current rear battle information.

(2) The CSP will use all assets available to maximize the internal defense of the air base. In planning the defense of this area, those parts of the base containing resources that are critical to the operational missions must be identified. These critical areas will include aircraft operating areas, weapons storage areas, critical support areas, and the air operations center of the base. Security measures will be taken to restrict access to these areas.

b. Security measures. Internal defense will include patrols, tactical sensors, mines (when approved), observation and listening posts, and obstacles. Defensive positions will be prepared around and throughout the base to provide an organized defense through the full depth of the base. These security measures may be integrated across adjacent base boundaries. Fields of fire and preplanned targets for indirect fire systems will be established, coordinated where appropriate with host nation authorities, and provided to the RAOC and to the external security force with area responsibility. Additionally, rally points and assembly areas will be established around the base to assist in integrating external forces with the existing defense force during combat operations. The military police will coordinate these measures directly with the CSP. The Base Defense Liaison Team (BDLT) will review these coordination procedures to ensure mutual support.

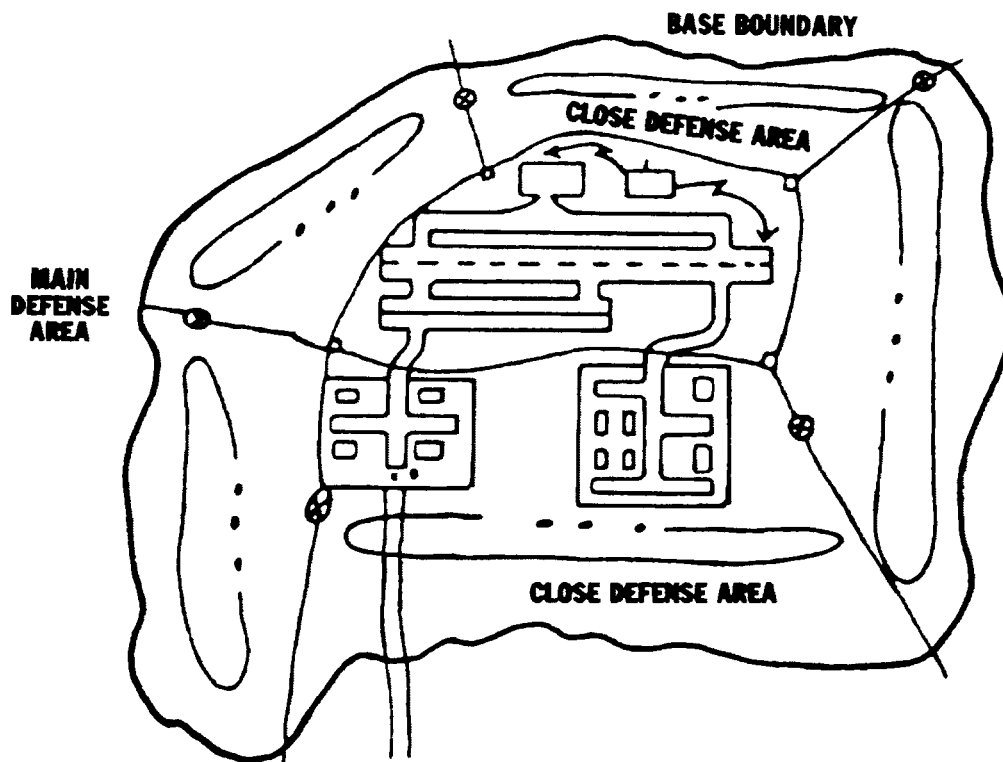


Figure 2. Internal air base defense (close defense area)

8. External defense

a. The main defense area may not be a sterile environment. The RAOC will ensure, through the BDLT, that the base defense plan for the air base is coordinated with the base defense plans of the surrounding bases/base clusters. The MP assigned the external ABGD mission in the main defense area (MDA) will come under the operational control of or be attached to the air base commander. (Fig. 3 depicts the MP in the MDS and para 9 discusses more fully command and control relationships.) The MP assigned the external ABGD mission, on behalf of the base commander, will integrate all available U.S. resources to enhance the external security around the base. This includes coordination with other MP units assigned an area security mission. The MP will coordinate with local host nation assets who may agree to provide police, firemen, and other units operating in the rear. In areas where refugees or local civilians pose a security problem or are endangered, they should be evacuated or isolated by host nation authorities.

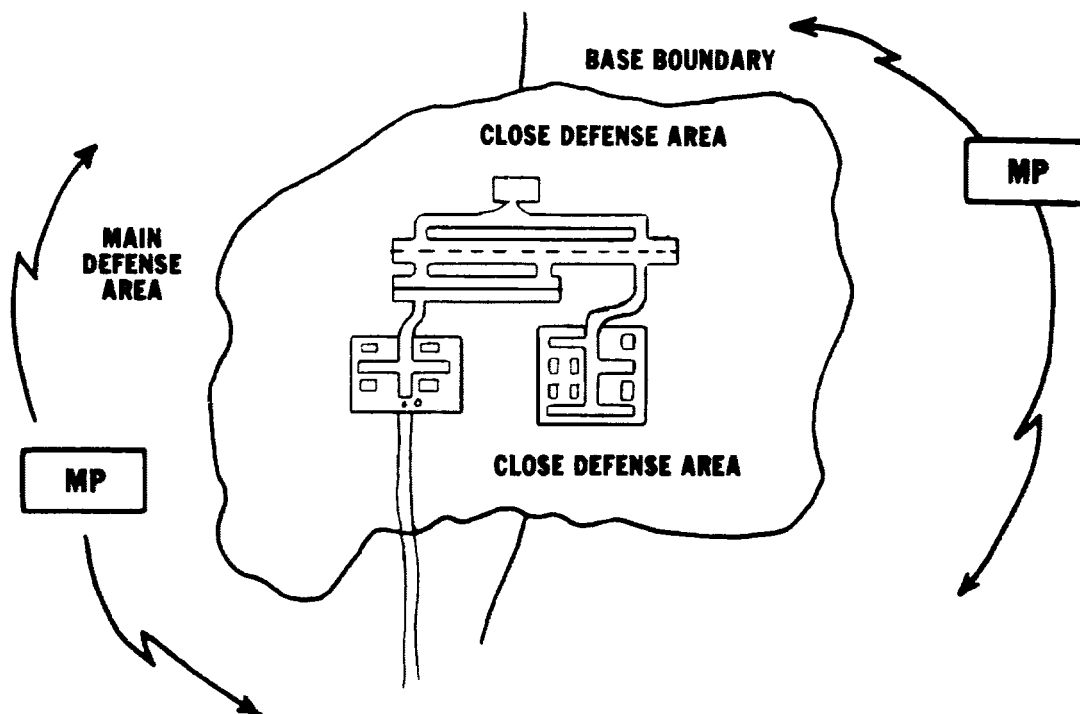


Figure 3. External security force around an MOB

b. Within the MDA there may be point air defense/short-range air defense (PAD/SHORAD) units deployed in defense of the air base. These units, because of their location in the MDA, will be incorporated into the base cluster security. These units will then assist in the ABGD effort. Therefore, ABGD planning and operations must include full coordination with any deployed PAD/SHORAD systems.

c. The MP not assigned an external ABGD mission may be assigned an area security mission under the control of the MP brigade outside the MDA of the base. The MP commander with the area security mission will coordinate directly with the air base BDOC. The commander will have the air base defense plan and be fully knowledgeable of the coordination points and fire plan used by the internal defense forces and those used by external defense forces under operational control (OPCON) of the air base commander.

d. When a TCF is committed against a level III threat, it will be assigned an appropriate area of operations and be given the mission to defeat the threat. Ground units within this area of operation will come under operational control of the TCF commander until the threat is neutralized. When this area of operation encompasses the area of responsibility of the base, the rear battle officer, in coordination with the air base commander, will direct the transfer of OPCON of [Army or external] ABGD forces to the TCF (fig 4), based upon carefully weighed force requirements. The air base commander will retain those assets necessary to ensure disposition of critical Air Force resources. The defensive decisions made by the air base commander will be coordinated with the RAOC which will assist in the defense of the air base. The TCF commander, using the assets under his operational control, will then execute combat operations to defeat the level III incursion. During the mission, the TCF remains under the control of the rear battle officer. Upon completion of this mission, the TCF commander will relinquish operational control of ABGD forces.

e. The RAOC will incorporate available fire support assets into the defense of each air base. This may be Army indirect or direct fire systems, Air Force air support, or internal air base organic indirect fire systems. Organic indirect fire systems on the air base will be incorporated into the base defense plan to ensure compatibility with all air base defense measures in the surrounding area and mutual support to other bases when practical. Also, echelon or host nation assets (direct or indirect fire systems) may be provided to the rear area as part of the force allocation by the echelon commander or host nation. These fire support assets will be incorporated into the base defense plans. These plans and procedures will incorporate necessary control measures to facilitate responsive, accurate fires for the air base and will be reviewed by the fire support element in the RAOC.

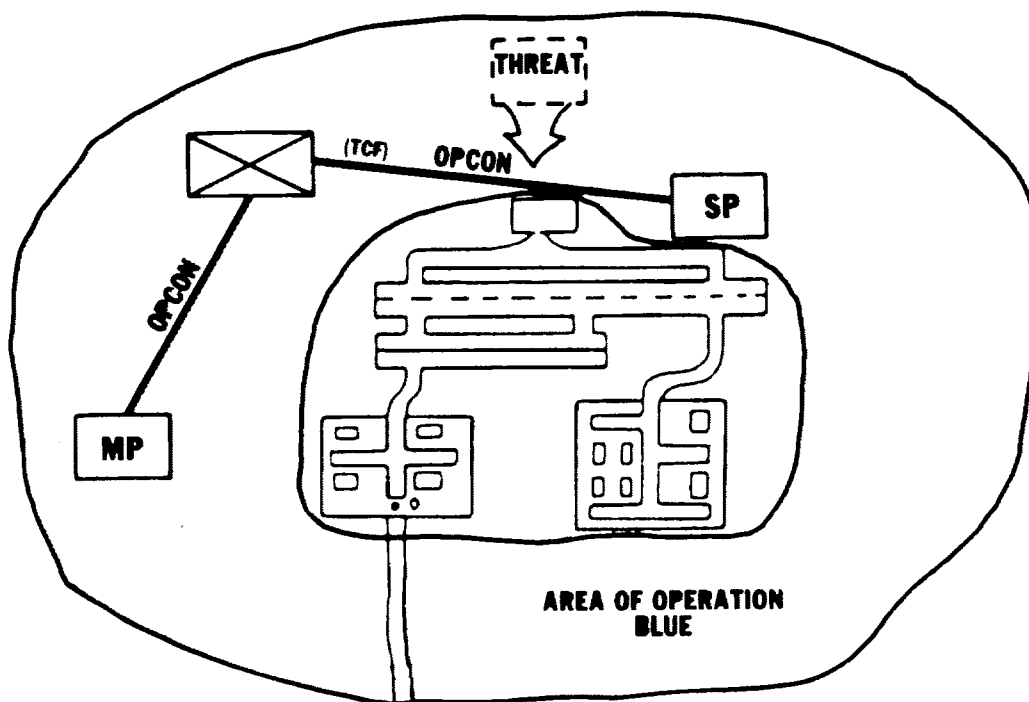


Figure 4. TCF in support of a MOB

f. The Air Force retains primary responsibility for intelligence and counterintelligence (CI) operations in support of ABGD. Air Force assets will provide intelligence and counterintelligence information to the BDOC, which will coordinate with the RAOC on appropriate intelligence affecting the air base. The RAOC, through fused intelligence from Army and Air Force sources, will provide intelligence information to all rear area bases. See AFR 206-1 for a more detailed discussion of ABGD intelligence operations.

g. To meet the assessed level II threat, ABGD forces for the air base must be in place before threat forces are in position to accomplish their mission. The timing for the positioning of the external defense forces must be geared to an appropriate alert stage or specific intelligence indicators.

9. Command, control, and communications

a. The command and control relationship is designed to provide unity of command and decisive response to the impending threat. The rear battle officer in consultation with the air base commanders must decide, based on the threat and forces available, which procedures provide the greatest overall security to the air bases and the rear area. The need for and the availability of ABGD forces will have a significant impact on this decision. The most responsive command and control relationship would result from having adequate forces to place assets under the control of every air base in theater.

b. The Air Force retains command and control of ABGD operations through the level II threat. (See fig 5 for operational relationships under various threat levels.) The MP assets assigned on ABGD mission against a level I or level II threat will be under the OPCON of the air base commander or the designated representative and employed in an external ABGD role.

c. The echelon commander will direct the appropriate command and control option based on the factors of METT-T. MP units, when conducting ABGD operations, should come under the OPCON of, or be attached to, the air base commander. If conditions preclude this command relationship, options available to the rear battle officer to execute the ABGD mission are as follows:

(1) MP units may be assigned an area security mission under control of the MP brigade and placed under the operational control of the air base commander by the rear battle officer, through the RAOC, when threat forces are anticipated within the MDA of that air base. Transfer of OPCON must occur in sufficient time to allow effective employment of the units. This option applies to an austere environment or during the initial phase of a contingency operation.

(2) Tactical combat forces may conduct screening operations within the MDA under the operational control of the rear battle officer and may augment the air base ground defense when the threat is anticipated or identified.

d. When a TCF is assigned to defeat a level III incursion, those MP units assigned the external ABGD mission within the TCF area of operation (AO) will come under the operational control of the TCF commander (fig 5). The TCF may be assigned areas of operation by the rear battle officer that encompasses the air base boundary. The rear battle officer will closely coordinate this decision with the air base commander.

e. Communications interoperability through a secure, robust, redundant, high-efficiency communications system will be required between ABGD units, staff elements, headquarters and operations centers. This will be achieved by battlefield automated systems, AM, FM and wire systems. Inter- and intra-communications and procedures are fundamental in ABGD operations. Where host nation forces provide external ABGD, a communication interface will be necessary.

10. Combat service support (CSS)

CSS requirements for Army units performing the ABGD mission are normally fulfilled by the Army support structure. CSS provided to Army units by the supported air base will be referenced in appropriate ABGD operation plans (OPLAN).

11. Host nation support

Theater operations will usually be conducted in a coalition environment. If the host nation is a viable supporting government, it may provide support to the Air Force and/or Army. The rear battle environment is dependent on the role the host nation elects to play in the rear battle. Certain host nations may elect to provide external security for U.S. operated air bases. In this case, the rear battle mission remains the responsibility of that nation. Depending on the theater, the host nation area of responsibility may be behind the corps rear boundary or in the communications zone. The host nation's level of participation in ABGD will be determined by bilateral agreements arranged prior to or during hostilities. Command and control relationships will be clearly defined to ensure unity of command.

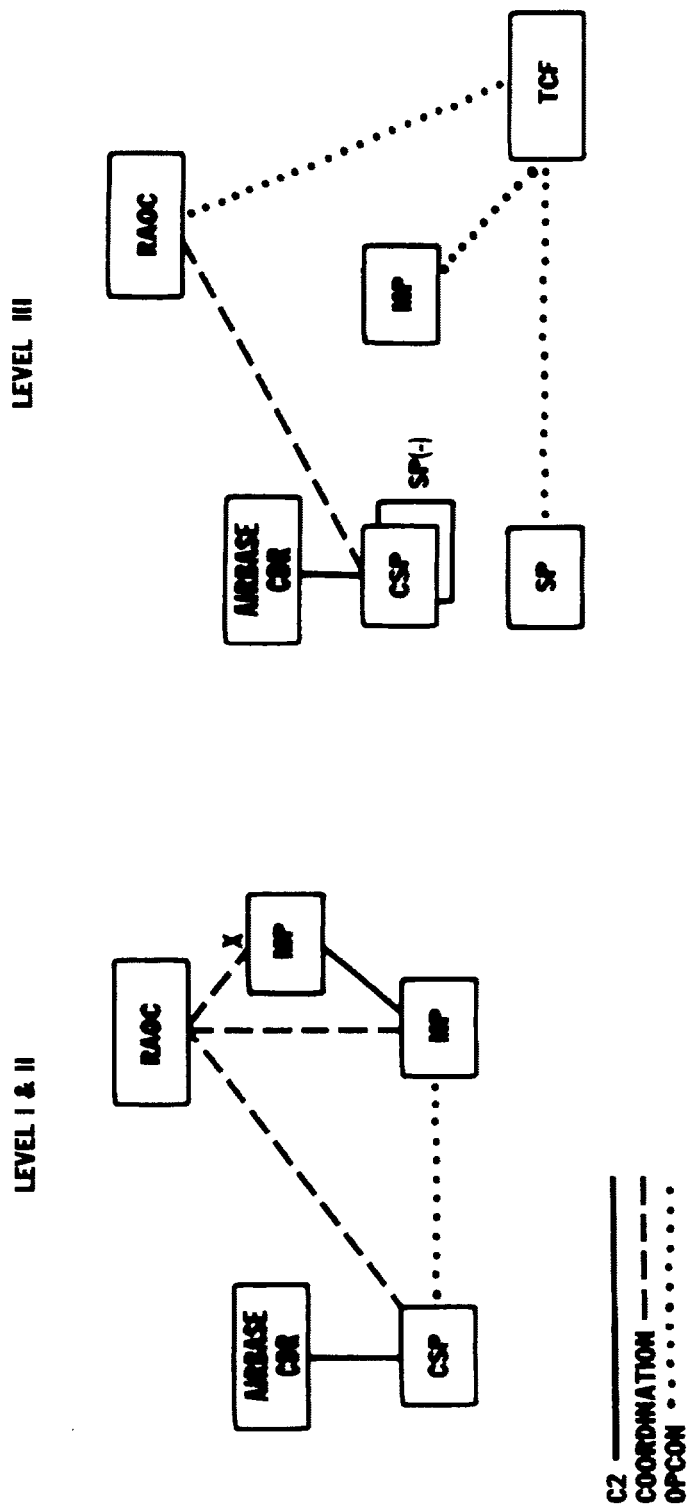


Figure 5. Operational relationships

Glossary

Section I Abbreviations

ABGD

air base ground defense

AO

area of operations

BDLT

Base Defense Liaison Team

CI

counterintelligence

CDA

close defense area

CSP

Chief of Security Police

CSS

combat service support

FLOT

forward line of own troops

HNS

host nation support

MDA

main defense area

METT-

mission, enemy, terrain, troops and time available

MOB

main operating base

MP

military police

OPCON

operational control

OPLAN

operation plan

PAD

point air defense

RAOC

Rear Area Operations Center

SHORAD

short-range air defense

SP

security police

TCF

Tactical Combat Force

Section II Terms

Air base ground defense

Local security measures, both normal and emergency, required to nullify and reduce the effectiveness of enemy ground attack directed against USAF air bases and installations.

Base

A locality from which operations are projected or supported, or an area or locality containing installations that provide logistic and other support.

Base or installation boundary

Normally, the dividing line between internal and external defense. The exact location of the dividing line is subject to minor deviation from the legal base boundary on a case-by-case basis to accommodate local conditions. Such delineations will be incorporated into appropriate OPLANs. The area lying within the agreed boundary of the base is designated the close defense area. The ground outside the agreed boundary, normally out to a distance of 3–5 kilometers, is the main defense area.

Base Chief of Security Police

Air base commander's principal representative for ground defense and, therefore, plans, organizes, directs, coordinates, and controls air base ground defense.

Base cluster

Combat, combat support, and combat service support units in the rear area are employed based on mission requirements and are grouped together for protection. A base cluster may have no clearly defined perimeter. An Air Force base, being a base cluster in and of itself, will exercise all coordination and support responsibilities.

Base defense

The local military measures, both normal and emergency, required to nullify or reduce the effectiveness of enemy attacks on, or sabotage of, a base so as to ensure that the maximum capacity of its facilities is available to U.S. forces.

Base defense liaison team

A four-member team dispatched by the Rear Area Operations Center to coordinate base defense planning with the Base Defense Operations Center. The team provides expertise in combat operations; nuclear, chemical, and biological operations; engineer support; and military police operations for the bases and base clusters.

Command and control

The exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned forces in the accomplishment of the mission. Command and control functions are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities, and procedures employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling forces and operations in the accomplishment of the mission.

Echelon commander

The Army commander who is assigned responsibility for and authority to conduct military operations for the specified geographical area.

Host nation support

Civil and military assistance rendered in peace and war by a host nation to allied forces and treaty organizations that are located in or in transit through the host nation's territory. The type and volume of support to be furnished, as well as all matters of cost and reimbursement, will be agreed upon between the nations involved using treaties or agreements.

Installations

A grouping of facilities, located in the same vicinity, which support particular functions. Installations may be elements of a base.

Operational control

The authority delegated to a commander to direct forces assigned so that the commander may accomplish specific

missions or tasks that are usually limited by function, time or location; to deploy units concerned, and to retain or assign tactical control of those units. It does not include authority to assign separate employment of components of the units concerned. Neither does it, of itself, include administrative or logistic control.

Rear Area Operations Center

An Army rear area control center responsible for planning, coordinating, directing, and monitoring the rear battle.

Rear battle

Those actions taken by all units (combat, combat support, combat service support, and host nation), singly or in joint/combined effort, to secure the force, neutralize or defeat enemy forces in the rear area, and ensure freedom of action in the deep and close-in battles.

Rear battle officer

That Army officer appointed by the echelon commander to execute Rear Battle operations within the assigned area of operations.

Tactical combat force

Those combat forces the echelon commander assigns the mission of defeating rear battle threat forces.

Theater

The geographical area outside the continental United States for which a commander of a unified or specified command has been assigned military responsibility.

Section III

Special Abbreviations and Terms

This section contains no entries.

UNCLASSIFIED

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PIN: 060022-000

DATE: 12- 5-01

TIME: 13:01:57

PAGES SET: 18

DATA FILE: C:\Wincomp\lucky.fil

DOCUMENT: DA PAM 525-14

DOC STATUS: NEW PUBLICATION